



ADVANCING FAITH, FAMILY AND FREEDOM

May 19, 2016

Representative
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Family Research Council (FRC) and the families we represent, I urge you to oppose Representative Blumenauer's (D-OR) amendment to H.R. 4974. This amendment would use the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act of 2016 as a vehicle to undermine the Federal government's rejection of marijuana as medicine. FRC reserves the right to score against votes for this amendment's passage.

Current Veterans Health Administration policy (VHA-Directive 2011-004) prohibits VA providers from completing forms seeking recommendations or opinions regarding a veteran's participation in a state marijuana program. This is in keeping with the designation of marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug under the Controlled Substances Act, a designation that states there are currently no acceptable medical uses for marijuana and attaches criminal penalties to its possession, distribution and possession.

Most major medical associations (including the American Medical Association, National MS Society, American Society of Addiction Medicine, American Glaucoma Foundation, and American Cancer Society) oppose marijuana use and legalization. The sort of unequivocal research demonstrating the health benefits of marijuana is simply not there to justify selective enforcement of the law on a purely federal matter.

To the contrary, the National Institute on Drug Abuse has linked marijuana use to mental illness, psychosis, depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts and addiction. They have also noted it may cause permanent impairment in cognitive ability and intelligence.

The historically noncontroversial Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Act should not be hijacked to allow medical professionals to voice recommendations or opinions on a drug that is not recognized or approved as such by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Again we urge you to oppose the Blumenauer amendment to H.R. 4974 that would allow VA providers to circumvent Federal law marijuana. Again, FRC reserves the right to score against votes for this amendment's passage.

Sincerely,

David Christensen
Vice President of Government Affairs